

The Negro lawyers of West Virginia met recently and organized

The Mountain Bar Association, J.M. Ellis, of Oak Hill, President and

T. Giles Nutter, of Charleston, Secretary.

new York Times 12-21-16

Feb
Crisis, 1916.

164,

A special correspondent of one of the great dailies, in writing about the famous Mohr murder trial which is being fought out in Providence, has the following to say:

The defense of the Negroes is being made by two Negro lawyers, both able men, one a pure-blooded African and the other a mulatto. They are fighting to save clients of their own color. What happens to the white woman does not matter. Brown and Spellman must be saved, and so far in these first operations of the court machinery, Edwards and Lewis, the two Negro lawyers, show more intelligence than do the lawyers for Mrs. Mohr, the one-time shop girl and discarded wife of the rich physician who was slain.

If there is any circumstance of life in which a man cannot "fake" or "bluff" or cover up deficiencies and ignorance, it is in the conduct of a law case, where he faces a judge, jury and alert opponents so here is more testimony against the ancient charge of Negro inferiority. And it is the best kind of testimony, that of an unwilling witness.

The New York Times 12/21/16
COSEY DISBARRED BY SUPREME COURT AS UNFIT

Newark, June 21.—Declaring that the dealings of Alfred B. Cosey, a colored lawyer of this city, with his clients indicated a lack of legal ethics and of moral sense, the Supreme Court handed down a decision at Trenton on June 8 directing that Cosey's name be stricken from the roll of attorneys and counsellors of the State. In the concluding paragraph of its opinion the court says:

"If this attorney really believed that he was entitled to the money he claimed, he is morally unfit to practice law; if he did not so believe, he was, of course, guilty of fraud and deception practiced in a relation of sacred trust and confidence."

The disbarment proceedings conducted before a branch of the Supreme Court sitting here were substantially a rehearing of the eight charges considered by Vice-Chancellor Howell and fully discussed in his opinion, which resulted in an order by Chancellor Walker barring Cosey from practicing as a solicitor of that court. In view of the opinion of Vice-Chancellor Howell the Supreme Court said it seemed unnecessary to review the charges in detail.

W. H. Lewis 9-21-16
NEBRASKA LAWYER COMITS SUICIDE

(Special to THE NEW YORK AGE.)
OMAHA, Neb., Dec. 20.—Dependent because an operation for cancer on the brain was not successful, Counselor Silas Robbins, the first colored man admitted to practice law in this State, committed suicide by shooting himself through the brain.

The operation was performed several months ago, but Mr. Robbins had not lost his cheerful disposition, although his case was known to be hopeless, until a few days before he took his life.

Mr. Robbins was a native of Ohio and was 57 years of age. He came to Nebraska in 1889, and was admitted to the bar, being the first Negro admitted in this State. He is survived by the widow, two sons, Guy and Clifford, one daughter, Mrs. William Penn, and a stepson.

IAN 18 1916
NEGRO TO TEST U. R.'S RIGHT TO ROUTE PASSENGERS

Crittenden Clark, a negro lawyer, yesterday filed suit for \$5000.05 damages in the Circuit Court against the United Railways Company to test the company's right to route passengers on a transfer system according to the dictates of the conductor.

Clark claims that the passenger and not the conductor should decide which is the shortest way to the point the passenger wishes to reach. Clark states in his petition he boarded a Welston car in the 5800 block on Easton avenue and asked for a transfer on the Eighteenth street line and thence to the Market line. This, he claims, would be the shortest

way to his office near the City Hall. The conductor gave him a Sarah street and Laclede avenue transfer and refused to change the transfer, the petition alleges.

ATTORNEY LEWIS IS DOMINATING MOHR CASE

Special to THE NEW YORK AGE.
PROVIDENCE, R. I.—William H. Lewis, the colored attorney in the Mohr case, is the dominating figure of the array of counsel. Physically and otherwise he towers above the others, and his quickness of perception, his brilliant cross-examinations, and his alertness, logic, politeness and keen sense of humor stamp him at once as an exceptional man. He is regarded as one of the ablest lawyers of Boston.

When Mr. Lewis was a freshman at Amherst in '92, Judge Stearns, the presiding judge at this trial, was a senior. Lewis played center on the Harvard football team in '93, was an assistant United States attorney-general at Washington under Taft, an assistant United States attorney at Boston appointed by Roosevelt and was elected to the Massachusetts legislature. In Lewis' law class at Harvard was Attorney-General Herbert A. Rice, who is head of the prosecution's legal staff.

HERALD

Washington, D. C.

COLORED LAWYERS ORGANIZE.

A large number of colored lawyers of the District met at 317 Sixth street northwest, yesterday and formed a temporary organization, looking to their mutual benefit and protection. The following officers were elected: L. Melendez King, chairman; E. B. Hubert, secretary; Thomas L. Jones, treasurer; J. E. Collins, sergeant-at-arms.

A committee on permanent organization was appointed, consisting of Joseph H. Stewart, E. L. Gaskins and J. E. Collins.

The next meeting will be held at 317 Sixth street northwest, Thursday afternoon, December 21, at 3 o'clock.

ADMITTED TO U. S. COURT.

Chicago Defender
Washington, D. C., April 1.—Attorney Richard D. Evans, who, with Thomas J. Jones, this city, were presented to the Supreme Court and were admitted to practice on the motion made by Judge Robert Terrell, of the Municipal Court of this city. Mr. Evans is a graduate of Howard University. He will return to the "Lone Star" State to practice and Mr. Jones will remain here.

Lawyers-1916



HON. CORNELIUS J. JONES, STRONG RACE DEFENDER.

Fighting the Battles of the Negro Claimants

The Topeka Plaindealer
Greatest Legal Battle of the Age—Cornelius J. Jones Contending for Rights of Civil War Cotton Tax Claimants! 6/30/16

The Plaindealer is delighted to learn that Hon. Cornelius J. Jones, chief counsel for the civil war revenue cotton tax claimants, with headquarters at Memphis, Tenn., has consented to visit Topeka in the near future to discuss the principles involved in the suit now pending in the Court of Appeals at Washington, District of Columbia, wherein the persons who labored in the production of cotton in the South, from which \$68,000,000 were collected under the enforcement of the act of Congress passed in 1862, and operated until 1868, under claim of an emergency revenue measure, and which labor was performed under the system of involuntary servitude, and without compensation, are proceeding to secure judgment upon this \$68,000,000.

While the editor has known Mr. Jones for many years, we believe it is timely to inform our readers generally of the size man this is who is handling this important suit.

Investigation discloses the facts that Mr. Jones served his race as a member of the House of Representatives of the state legislature of Mississippi for one term during the early '90s. He was the first and only Negro on the floor of that body who dared to cross swords with the present Senator Vardaman from Mississippi, who was also a member of the House at that time, when the question was up for passing the constitutional convention bill, which afterwards did pass, and by which the Negroes of that state were disfranchised. Mr. Jones went down on record with voice ringing loud and clear, hurling a bitter protest.

Mr. Jones has been engaged in the active practice of law for more than twenty-eight years. He was the first Negro lawyer in this country to make an oral argument before the Supreme Court of the United States in the year of 1895, in the case of John Gibson vs. Mississippi, wherein the right to have members of his race on a jury which tries a Negro for a criminal offense was presented before the United States Supreme Court for adjudication. He also carried up to that court the case of Henry Williams vs. Mississippi, wherein the question was presented asking a judicial determina-

tion of the right of the state to enact any laws abridging the suffrage of its citizens who were qualified for suffrage under the terms of the enabling act of Congress admitting the Southern states to representation in Congress after the close of the civil war.

Mr. Jones was nominated for Congress by the Republican party of the Third district of Mississippi in 1896, the year the late President McKinley was first nominated. The candidate for Congress was counted out, and he made a contest before the committee of privileges and elections of the House of Representatives. He was renominated by the Republican party of the same district of the state in 1898, was counted out, and made his contest before the committee of privileges and elections again. Mr. Jones is one of the civil war revenue cotton tax claimants himself, and the claimants feel congratulated highly to have the services of this able and distinguished jurist, being one of their race, and one of their number as claimants.

Mr. Jones has just completed a tour through the states of Kansas and Missouri, and the claimants, wherever he appears, show the greatest amount of interest and devotion, all of which are well deserved. The tour was wound up last Sunday night, June 25, at St. Louis, Mo., when Mr. Jones spoke at Pleasant Green Baptist church under the courtesy and special invitation of Rev. J. K. Parker, where the capacity of the building was taxed and scores were turned away because of the lack of accommodation.

We are expecting Mr. Jones to make a date for this community soon, and general notice will be given, and we assure the distinguished counsel that no community shall do more to show its appreciation of his laudable efforts than this community. It is proposed by friends here among the claimants that Mr. Jones speak at Kansas City, Kan., and also Kansas City, Mo., before he heads south again.

MAKING GREAT

Wm. H. Lewis and John B. Edwards Dominant Figures in Famous Mohr Murder Trial *New York Age* 6/27-16 **OVERSHADOW WHITE LAWYERS**

Work of These Colored Lawyers Demonstrates That There Are Many Able Negro Professional Men Who Only Lack Opportunity to Demonstrate Their Ability—Prejudiced Women Writers Pay Tribute.

Special to THE NEW YORK AGE.
 PROVIDENCE, R. I.—The locally famous Mohr murder trial is fast drawing to a close, and within a few days we shall know whether a Rhode Island jury, drawn from the humbler walks of life, can disregard the inky avalanche of word-painted, hand-drawn, camera-focused hysterics, largely anti-Negro, released by the big brigade of "sob" sisters which descended upon these busy plantations two weeks ago. The expert "sobbers" have remained with us ever since, apparently with the idea of helping the murdered physician's wealthy widow, a colorless, pathetic figure, to escape the web so skilfully drawn about her by a resourceful attorney general, and to enmesh hopelessly the two Negro defendants, a stable boy and his assistant, who have no resources save those provided by the generosity of the ablest counsel—men with race pride—this State has ever seen engaged in a murder trial.

For the defense of Mrs. C. Franklin Mohr, the white woman, are arrayed former Mayor John J. Fitzgerald of Pawtucket, Democratic leader, keen, droit, eloquent; Arthur J. Cushing, Wm. F. Carroll and James A. McCartin. For C. Victor Brown stands William H. Lewis, Harvard athlete, former third assistant attorney general of the United States; and for Henry H. Spellman is John B. Edwards, quiet, studious, but effective.

Lewis the Outstanding Figure.

Ex-Mayor Fitzgerald, the readiest debater and most effective stump speaker and criminal jury lawyer in the State, can always be relied upon, above all others, to provide fireworks wherever he appears, especially in a big criminal case. He has a following which would pack any court room just to hear "Fighting Fitz" "eat 'em up."

But this claque has been loudest in praise of the work done in this celebrated case by Mr. Lewis, who is as mellifluous, unctuous and glacially cool, when occasion requires, as he is thunderous, galling and fiery when driving home a worth-while point. The trial had not gone a day before it was discovered that Mr. Lewis out-classed all the other lawyers in coolheadedness, in logic, in

subtlety, in his ability to extract damaging evidence against the State's contentions, even from the most hostile witnesses. Every "sob sister"—and we have with us the deans of the corps—has been forced to give William H. Lewis his due need of praise and the dispatches sent out from Providence to the great metropolitan dailies of Boston and New York have teemed with references to "the great Lewis," the "crafty," "shrewd," "able," "eloquent" Negro lawyer, who so easily eclipses the best the white race has provided for this dramatic event.

Edwards is Also a Factor.

Mr. Edwards, who has been harshly dealt with because he is of a darker shade, and is only recently from South Carolina, has deserved better treatment. He is not "big" as described by Dorothy Dix, nor of the "cottonfield type of darky" as pictured by Mrs. Jacques Futrelle, and while his language is reminiscent at times of South Carolina provincialisms, his points are clean-cut and telling.

Both these Negro lawyers are covering themselves with glory, and are scoring heavily for their race. They are demonstrating what Negroes have always claimed, that with an equal opportunity they will do a creditable share of the work before them. While Mr. Lewis has been a revelation to the white lawyers hereabouts who had never seen him in action, they have been impressed with this truth: That he is only one of many able Negroes in this country, who would be equally a revelation to them if the opportunity presented.

An observer on the fence is impressed with the absolute impartiality of such graphic writers as Elias McQuaid of the Boston American, who sees one effect of this trial, viz., the demonstration of Negro ability in the law that more than offsets Negro depravity among the lowly. If Brown and Spellman, and the half-breed Indian, Healie, the chauffeur—"squealer," represent one type of Negro—the type "farthest down"—so do Lewis and Edwards represent still another type—farthest up—and thus, representing this type, they impress indelibly upon the Caucasian, and other observers, the fact that races must be judged by the best as well as the worst individuals, and each individual must be judged by his own acts. Millions cannot be blamed for the criminal acts of a few.

Women Writers Yield Reluctant Credit

One other point well worth noticing is the reluctant testimony coming from Southern white women to the ability, legal learning and Chesterfieldian grace of a Negro, William H. Lewis, born in Portsmouth, Va., in contrast with the brightest legal luminaries of this "Yankee land" seat of culture. Even Dorothy Dix tries hard to suppress her Southern-born arrogance and antipathy and musters courage (or was it a mistake?) to write "Mr." once when referring to Lewis. In her story last Sunday, a keen, psychological and reflective study of the case, she mentioned Mr. Lewis seven times simply as "Lewis" but once as "Mr. Lewis" while

taking pains to speak of Atty. Edwards as "Edwards" and "darky" always and of all the other attorneys (white) as "Mr." this and "Mr." that, though, she practically admits in every story, they are hopelessly outclassed in every respect, save color alone, by the able old Harvard football star.

While it was generally believed when the trial began that there could be but one outcome, the conviction of two defendants, Brown and Spellman, on the charge of murder, and the release of Mrs. Mohr, with a light sentence for Healie, the informer, the two able Negro lawyers have succeeded in so entangling the state's witnesses that good lawyers who have heard or read the evidence now believe that there will be not more than one conviction at most, and possibly a mistrial for all three defendants. But whatever the outcome before the jury our two Negro lawyers have won a verdict for competence that nobody can deny or forget for many in this State.

JOHN C. MINKINS.

The Palatka Advocate
WELL PREPARED
Palatka Advocate
YOUNG LAWYER

7/10/16
Rise of Clifton T. A. French
at New York Bar

FIGURED IN MANY CONTESTS

Judge Dismisses Case of the People Against Septimus Rutherford Upon Convincing Argument and Weighty Evidence Produced by Attorney For the Defense.

By JOHN E. BRUCE "GRIT."

New York.—In the case of the people against Septimus Rutherford, a well known and popular member of the Salem Methodist Episcopal church in this city, recently tried, the legal talent of the colored race triumphed gloriously. Mr. Rutherford was charged with an offense which required a trial by jury. His counsel was Clifton T. A. French, a young attorney of our race whose ability as a practitioner is attracting the attention of the legal profession here in a way that is causing old timers in the profession to look well to their laurels.

Upon the completion of the testimony of the complaining witness at the trial in question a novel point of law was being argued by the counsel for the people and the defense when the

latter created much consternation in the court by the production of evidence of great weight and at the same time made a motion to dismiss the complaint. The court immediately granted the motion with full vindication, and the presiding judge paid Attorney French a fine personal compliment.

It is a high tribute to the legal ability of this young sprig of the law to be called to the bench by presiding Judge Rosalsky (who is austerity personified) and complimented and praised in fulsome phrase on his sound knowledge of legal procedure in a case of such vital importance to the defendant and his counsel. His course clearly indicated that he had read the law to some purpose and that he saw in this particular case an opportunity to put it to the test.

As soon as he made the motion to dismiss and produced certain evidence to justify his action in defense of his client the learned judge at once saw that he could do no other than to dismiss the complaint. Counselor French had scored. The judge realized it and the prosecuting attorney reluctantly admitted that he was defeated—outpointed, licked "to a frazzle" by a Negro attorney who understood what he wanted and got it. The judge and counsel at the bar owned the force of the Negro's ability and then extended their congratulations to the young disciple of Blackstone who had won a legal victory of which many an old veteran practitioner at the bar would have been proud to have to his credit. But this is not the only legal skirmish in which Mr. French has engaged. Another case in which he secured an acquittal for his client was that of The People versus William Anderson, which was bitterly contested at every point by this brilliant young man, and ended in the freeing of his client. Mr. French's practice covers both the civil and criminal courts, and thus far he has been successful in all the cases in which his firm has appeared.

Mr. French received the degree of B. A. from New York university and from Columbia the degrees of M. A., LL. B. and LL. M. In addition, he has completed all the resident work for the degree of Ph. D. and has only to write his thesis to obtain his diploma. Thus the professional men of the race everywhere are demonstrating their ability in the most convincing and gratifying manner to acquit themselves creditably in the learned professions.

The Atlanta Independent
MEETING OF THE NATIONAL NEGRO BAR ASSOCIATION.

7/8/16
To All Colored Members of the Bar:

A meeting of the National Bar Association is hereby called to meet in Kansas City, Mo., from August 16

to the 18th, inclusively, 1916, in connection with the National Negro Business League.

Every colored attorney in the active practice of the legal profession is invited to be present and participate in the deliberations of this session.

In these days of political, racial, military and economic upheaval there is certainly a necessity for the activity of the colored bar. And the best results can be had from our activity by unity of action, unity of purpose and exchange of ideas.

If the race is to be permanently benefited by wise statutory enactments, by conservative and intelligent agitation, and if that wisdom which is born of experience is to be exercised, certainly the colored attorneys must be brought into the equation. For no class of men is brought into connection in every day life with the actual civic needs and rights of our people more than the colored attorneys.

This is a great opportunity for us to join with our princely leader in the Business League, the Hon. Emmett J. Scott, and his associates, and make of this the greatest session in the history of the organization.

Let there be no bickerings, no jealousies, but let us realize that this is an opportunity for real and actual service.

We trust that we may have a record-breaking attendance and that out of this session great good may come and that we may be more united as a profession than ever before.

Signed:

PERRY W. HOWARD,
Pres., Jackson, Miss.
WM. H. HARRISON,
Sec., Oklahoma City, Okla.
Bureau of the Freeman,
1223 S Strete, N. W.

WASHINGTON, D. C., April 5.—The supreme Court of the United States presented an unusual scene last Monday when Attorney Richard D. Evans, of Waco, Texas, and Attorney Thomas L. Jones, of the District of Columbia, were admitted to the bar of that august judicial tribunal on the motion of Judge Robert Terrell, of the municipal court of this city.

Mr. Evans studied law at Howard University and graduated a few years ago from that noted school with high honors. Judge Terrell was one of his preceptors. He is now one of the foremost lawyers among our people in the "Lone Star State" and occupies a distinguished place among the colored political leaders of the country. He will be heard from at the Chicago convention in June.

Mr. Thomas L. Jones has earned a national reputation as a counsellor at law and enjoys one of the largest and most lucrative practices here at the nation's capital. He is an orator of force and brilliance and is a frequent demand on the "stage" in the great conflicts of the parties in the pivotal states. He has figured in many of the big causes at the District bar and is highly regarded by the officers of the courts and associates in the legal fra-

ternity of both races. A distinguished party accompanied these gentlemen to the Supreme Court and witnessed the ceremony with very deep interest. The party consisted of Former Governor B. S. Pinchback, of Louisiana; Thomas Fortune, the veteran journalist; R. P. Slaughter, editor of the Odd Fellows' Journal; Prof. L. M. Hershaw, the expert title examiner in the United States General Land Office; and R. W. Thompson, the correspondent, and attache of the Supervising Architect's Office, Treasury Department. After the court ceremony the gentlemen were the guests of Judge Terrell at a very toothsome luncheon at the Washington Cafe, formerly known as "Grays," 636 D street north-west. Speeches of congratulation, exchange of good fellowship and a rapid-fire discussion of some of the burning issues of the hour were enjoyable features of this feast of reason and flow of soul. Attorney Evans said he would go back to his far-away home in the "Lone Star State," strengthened and invigorated by reason of his delightful experiences at the nation's capital, and because of the good things predicted of him by the hospitable people he had met at every turn. His superb mental equipment, coupled with an optimistic spirit and commanding legal talents, give ample foundation for the belief that a brilliant future awaits him in the civic and professional arena for which he has so carefully prepared himself. Mr. Jones will win new laurels here "in our midst."



CLIFTON T. A. FRENCH, ESQ.